

## LP18 – Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- 15.25 Babergh and Mid Suffolk have a diverse landscape character, with parts of Babergh lying within Dedham Vale AONB and the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. Adjoining the Dedham Vale AONB is an area defined as the Stour Valley Project extending beyond Sudbury and into West Suffolk. The Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB also has a project area which encompasses the Shotley Peninsula. Whilst these project areas do not benefit from the same protection as the AONBs, development proposals in these areas should conserve their special qualities as identified in the Valued Landscape Assessments, and where relevant seek to deliver enhancements where the special qualities have been impacted by changes in farming practices or previous development.
- 15.26 The conservation of AONBs includes its setting. In line with the National Planning Policy Framework great weight is given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty in the AONBs and the conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations.
- 15.27 The Plan requires development to be sensitive to landscape character and visual amenity impacts. This could be achieved through the use of good built and landscape design, including materials and colour, siting, design and lighting, along with the associated mitigation measures which complement the local individual landscape character, archaeological and historic patterns of the settlement.

### Policy LP18 – Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- 1. Proposals for major development<sup>28</sup> within the AONBs will be refused other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest.**
- 2. The Councils will support non-major development within the AONBs and development within the setting<sup>29</sup> of the AONBs that:**
  - a. Gives great weight to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty;**
  - b. Integrates positively with the character of the area and reinforces local distinctiveness of the AONBs;**
  - c. Is sensitive to the natural and built landscape and visual impacts (including on dark skies and tranquil areas);**
  - d. Supports the provision and maintenance of local services, facilities and assets (including affordable housing), so long as it is commensurate with the character and objectives of the AONBs;**
  - e. Demonstrates special regard to conserving and enhancing landscape character, landscape values and heritage assets in the AONBs; and**
  - f. Conserves the distinctiveness of the AONBs (including quality views), supports the public enjoyment of these areas and the wider social and economic objectives set out in the AONB Management Plans.**

<sup>28</sup> Major Developments as defined within NPPF 2021 – “whether a proposal is ‘major development’ is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined”.

<sup>29</sup> Setting is considered to impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined in the opinion of LPA.

- 3. Development within the AONB Project Areas should have regard to the relevant Valued Landscape Assessment.**